Boston continues its quest to humanize City Hall plaza, and architects are welcoming the chance to come up with low-cost improvement ideas that, with any luck, can be implemented next year.

McPhee begs to differ: the Boston Redevelopment Authority "should leaf it alone" - Boston "is supposed to be built of brick and mortar. It's a city, for heaven's sake."

Iovine cheers Thom's Arena Stage, both as a catalyst for rejuvenating the neighborhood, and as a space that "offers not so much a coherent design vision as an experience of exhilarating activity."

In Australia, high hopes that the new Cairns Style Guide "will affect the way architects and developers think about building in Queensland's far north."

An AIA Trends survey finds the down economy is altering the residential real estate landscape (much of it creating an uptick in the right direction).

An eyeful of Arup's oh-so-green design of a "model stadium" that convinced FIFA officials to award Qatar the 2022 World Cup.

Setting the Stage for Renewal: Bing Thom's update and expansion of Harry Weese's Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. is an imaginative $135 million project that local planners are hoping will spur a $2 billion neighborhood makeover. ...like an operetta's village stage set with slopes and stairs, terraces and balconies, the space offers not so much a coherent design vision as an experience of exhilarating activity. By Julie V. Iovine - Wall Street Journal

Cairns mayor promotes tropical architecture; She hopes the Cairns Style Guide will affect the way architects and developers think about building in Queensland's far north - ABC News (Australia)

Arup Associates unveils Qatar 2022 World Cup 'model stadium': ...500-seater air conditioned structure was used to convince FIFA officials that the region's hot summer weather could be made harmless to the beautiful game. Designed to be zero carbon throughout... [images] - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Arup Architects bags Whitehaven Harbour contest: ...has won the RIBA Competition to design a £10 million mixed-used luxury apartment and office scheme in Whitehaven Harbour, Cumbria..."response to a challenging brief is delightful." [images] - The Architects' Journal (UK)

Six shortlisted for Hastings Pier revamp; ...suffered extensive fire damage following a suspected arson attack earlier this autumn. -- White Arkitekter; Adams & Sutherland; De Rijke Marsh Morgan (dRMM); FAT; Niall McLuaghlin; Wilkinson Eyre Regeneration & Renewal magazine (UK)

3rd annual DawnTown Miami Design competition winners announced; ...innovative designs for a seaplane terminal on an island in downtown Miami (great presentation).

Interior Design Best of Year 2010 winners (an impressive list, but not much info). -- Bill Taylor/Carol R. Johnson Associates; Henry Cobb/Pei Cobb Freed & Partners; Kallmann McKinnell & Knowles; Janet Marie Smith- Boston Herald

Hub planners envision more vibrant City Hall; Boston's Government Center Plaza, reviled as an eyesore for decades, could be transformed into an oasis...That was always the idea, said one of the plaza's original planners...The city's goal is to devise low-cost improvements that can be implemented in 2011. And architects are welcoming the chance. -- Bill Taylor/Carol R. Johnson Associates; Henry Cobb/Pei Cobb Freed & Partners; Kallmann McKinnell & Knowles; Janet Marie Smith- Boston Herald

Multigenerational homes, front porches gain favor; ...solar reflective roofs and access to public transportation, finds AIA's Home Design Trends Survey...Economic realities like high foreclosure rates, increased commuting time and costs, and a renewed interest in affordability are key drivers in altering the residential real estate landscape," says Kermit Baker... [images, links] - USA Today

Setting the Stage for Renewal: Bing Thom's update and expansion of Harry Weese's Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. is an imaginative $135 million project that local planners are hoping will spur a $2 billion neighborhood makeover. ...like an operetta's village stage set with slopes and stairs, terraces and balconies, the space offers not so much a coherent design vision as an experience of exhilarating activity... By Julie V. Iovine- Wall Street Journal
